



Written by [Raven Clabough](#) on December 31, 2010

Tea Party Hypocrisy on Display?

[Hotline On Call](#) reports: "According to a *Hotline* review of records compiled by Citizens Against Government Waste, the 52 members of the [Tea Party] caucus, which pledges to cut spending and reduce the size of government, requested a total of 764 earmarks valued at \$1,049,783,150 during Fiscal Year 2010, the last year for which records are available."



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Citizens Against Government Waste Vice President David Williams responds to the staggering figures: "It's disturbing to see the Tea Party Caucus requested that much in earmarks. This is their time to put up or shut up, to be blunt. There's going to be a huge backlash if they continue to request earmarks."

Some, however, contend that earmarks are in fact [necessary](#) in order for Congress to properly appropriate funds. Republican Congressman Ron Paul, who votes against unconstitutional spending but supports the concept of congressional earmarks, explains:

Congress is reneging on our responsibilities [when it does not earmark] because it is the responsibility of the Congress to earmark. That's our job. We're supposed to tell the people how we're spending the money, not to just deliver it in a lump sum to the executive branch and let them deal with it. And then it's dealt with behind the scenes.

Actually, if you voted against all the earmarks, there would be less transparency. Earmarks really allow transparency and we know exactly where the money is being spent.

Others assert that the process of banning earmarks would be a symbolic step in exhibiting a real effort to be fiscally responsible, though it should be one in a number of actions taken to reduce the deficit and federal spending.

House Republican Michelle Bachmann founded the Tea Party Caucus in July, claiming that it would be a force against government overspending. "The American people are speaking out loud and clear. They have had enough of the spending, the bureaucracy, and the government knows best mentality running rampant today throughout the halls of Congress," she declared in a July 15 statement. In a letter addressed to House Administration Committee chairman Bob Brady, she indicated that the Caucus "will serve as an informal group of Members dedicated to promote Americans' call for fiscal responsibility, adherence to the Constitution, and limited government."

Hotline indicates that Bachmann and 13 of her colleagues did not request earmarks in the last fiscal year, but that a number of others have. Some Tea Party members who had previously requested earmarks withdrew their requests upon joining the Caucus, including Rodney Alexander of Louisiana,



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who asserts that he “stands with his fellow Republicans in the House in supporting the current earmark ban.”

Below is a list of the members of the Tea Party Caucus, the number of earmark requests, and the total cost for each:

- Aderholt (R-AL) — 69 — \$78,263,000
- Akin (R-MO) — 9 — \$14,709,000
- Alexander (R-LA) — 41 — \$65,395,000
- Bachmann (R-MN) — 0 — 0
- Barton (R-TX) — 14 — \$12,269,400
- Bartlett (R-MD) — 19 — \$43,060,650
- Bilirakis (R-FL) — 14 — \$13,600,000
- R. Bishop (R-UT) — 47 — \$93,980,000
- Burgess (R-TX) — 15 — \$15,804,400
- Broun (R-GA) — 0 — 0
- Burton (R-IN) — 0 — 0
- Carter (R-TX) — 26 — \$42,232,000
- Coble (R-NC) — 19 — \$18,755,000
- Coffman (R-CO) — 0 — 0
- Crenshaw (R-FL) — 37 — \$54,424,000
- Culberson (R-TX) — 22 — \$33,792,000
- Fleming (R-LA) — 10 — \$31,489,000
- Franks (R-AZ) — 8 — \$14,300,000
- Gingrey (R-GA) — 19 — \$16,100,000
- Gohmert (R-TX) — 15 — \$7,099,000
- S. Graves (R-MO) — 11 — \$8,331,000
- R. Hall (R-TX) — 16 — \$12,232,000
- Harper (R-MS) — 25 — \$80,402,000
- Hergert (R-CA) — 5 — \$5,946,000
- Hoekstra (R-MI) — 9 — \$6,392,000
- Jenkins (R-KS) — 12 — \$24,628,000
- S. King (R-IA) — 13 — \$6,650,000
- Lamborn (R-CO) — 6 — \$16,020,000
- Luetkemeyer (R-MO) — 0 — 0
- Lummis (R-WY) — 0 — 0



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- Marchant (R-TX) — 0 — 0
- McClintock (R-CA) — 0 — 0
- Gary Miller (R-CA) — 15 — \$19,627,500
- Jerry Moran (R-KS) — 22 — \$19,400,000
- Myrick (R-NC) — 0 — 0
- Neugebauer (R-TX) — 0 — 0
- Pence (R-IN) — 0 — 0
- Poe (R-TX) — 12 — \$7,913,000
- T. Price (R-GA) — 0 — 0
- Rehberg (R-MT) — 88 — \$100,514,200
- Roe (R-TN) — 0 — 0
- Royce (R-CA) — 7 — \$6,545,000
- Scalise (R-LA) — 20 — \$17,388,000
- P. Sessions (R-TX) — 0 — 0
- Shadegg (R-AZ) — 0 — 0
- Adrian Smith (R-NE) — 1 — \$350,000
- L. Smith (R-TX) — 18 — \$14,078,000
- Stearns (R-FL) — 17 — \$15,472,000
- Tiahrt (R-KS) — 39 — \$63,400,000
- Wamp (R-TN) — 14 — \$34,544,000
- Westmoreland (R-GA) — 0 — 0
- Wilson (R-SC) — 15 — \$23,334,000
- TOTAL : 764 — \$1,049,783,150

Of the members of the Tea Party Caucus, Representative Danny Rehberg's name appeared on the most earmarks, as he requested funding for 88 projects either on his own or by signing on to someone else's earmarks.

Hotline explains:

More than one member can sign onto an earmark. Still, there are 29 caucus members who requested on their own or joined requests for more than \$10 million in earmark funding, and seven who wanted more than \$50 million in funding.

In a statement issued by Rehberg's office, he remarked ironically:

It's easy to be a member of the Tea Party Caucus because, like them, I agree that we're Taxed Enough Already and we've got to balance the budget by cutting spending instead of raising taxes. Deficit spending is not new, but the unprecedented rate of spending in Congress is.

David Williams of Citizens Against Government Waste remains unconvinced by claims of Tea Party



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Caucus members indicating that fiscal responsibility is a priority. "Seeing is believing. It's going to take a lot more than rhetoric to convince us."



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